

Ken Takeuchi et al. – U.S. Serial No. 10/073,999**REMARKS**

The Office Action of April 14, 2005, has been carefully reviewed and these remarks are responsive thereto. Reconsideration and allowance of the instant application are respectfully requested.

Claims 47-60, 62, 63, and 65-66 are pending. No claims have been amended. The above listing of claims is presented for the Examiner's convenience.

Rejection of Claims Over Hemink

Claims 47-60, 62, 63, and 65-66 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) over Hemink. Applicants traverse.

Claim 47 recites, *inter alia*:

“ a common latch circuit connected to one ends of said first and second bit lines;

wherein first program /read data of said first memory cell is latched in said common latch circuit, while second program /read data of said second memory cell is held by said second bit line.”

Support for this claim may be found at least in Figures 60A-60D.

With this amendment, Applicant emphasizes the common latch circuit. Hemink fails to disclose the common latch circuit as claimed. Rather, Hemink discloses separate latch circuits (the upper one and lower one) in Figure 13. Accordingly, claim 47 is allowable over Hemink.

The other independent claims and dependent claims are allowable for similar reasons.

Rejection of Claims Over Sakui

Claims 47-60, 62, 63, and 65-66 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) over Sakui et al. Applicants traverse.

Claim 47 recites, *inter alia*:

“ a common latch circuit connected to one ends of said first and second bit lines;

wherein first program /read data of said first memory cell is latched in said common latch circuit, while second program /read data of said second memory cell is held by said second bit line.”

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Support for this claim may be found at least in Figures 60A-60D.

The Examiner has cited Figure 38 against the present claims. Figure 38 of Sakui et al. does not relate to the recitations of claim 47. Column 33, lines 27-39 of Sakui et al. indicate that the data circuit of Figure 38 relates to storing data in pairs.

“ FIG. 38 shows an arrangement using a differential sense amplifier. In this case, 1-bit data may be stored in two memory cell units as complementary data. Data is read by detecting a small difference between signal amounts (potentials) output from the two memory cell units and amplifying this difference. This allows a high-speed read.

One-bit data is stored in a pair of memory cell units. For this reason, even when the program/erase endurance characteristics of one memory cell unit degrade due to the repeated data change operation, the reliability does not decrease as far as the other memory cell unit has satisfactory program/erase endurance characteristics.”

Both the left and right side memory cells are accessed in parallel using BLi and /BLi. In other words, they operate the same way at the same time. This is different from the recitations of claim 47.

In FIG. 38 of Sakui et al., a first bit line BLi is connected to a node of a latch circuit, which is different from a node of the latch circuit, a second bit line /BLi is connected to. In other words, as in FIGS. 13 and 20 of Hemnik et al., the first and second bit lines are not connected to a common node of the latch circuit. In addition, Sakui et al. does not disclose that data of a first memory cell is latched in the latch circuit while data of a second memory cell is held in the second bit line. Therefore, the present invention is not anticipated by Sakui et al.

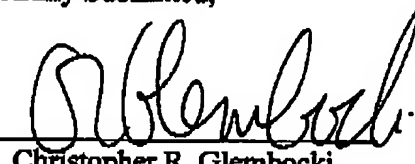
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The other independent claims and dependent claims are allowable for similar reasons.

It is believed that no fee in addition to the extension of time fee is required for this submission. If any fees are required or if an overpayment is made, the Commissioner is authorized to debit or credit our Deposit Account No. 19-0733 accordingly. No additional claim fees are believed due. If any fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to debit our deposit account no. 19-0733.

Respectfully Submitted,

By: _____



Christopher R. Glembocki
Reg. No. 38,800

BANNER & WITCOFF, LTD.
1001 G Street, N.W., 11th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 824-3000

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It is believed that no additional fee is due, as fees were paid with the submission.
However, the Assistant Commissioner is authorized to charge or credit our Deposit Account No.
19-0733 as appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,

BANNER & WITCOFF, LTD.

Dated: September 14, 2005

By:



Christopher R. Glembocki
Registration No. 38,800